

A STUDY ON LEADERSHIP QUALITIES AMONG AAO'S & AO'S OF STATE AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT OF TAMIL NADU

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ABSTRACT

The study was carried out to examine leadership qualities among Assistant Agricultural Officers (AAO's) and Agricultural Officers (AO's) of State Agricultural Department of Tamil Nadu. The study was conducted at State Agricultural Extension Management Institute (STAMIN). A sample of 100 AAO's and 100 AO's who underwent training at STAMIN were used as respondents, to find out their leadership qualities through self-assessment of their own leadership quality level. A self-assessing tool with five point scale was developed and standardized. A questionnaire including the scale was administered to the respondents. The results revealed that 52 per cent of AAO's rated their leadership quality at fair level. Leadership qualities such as self-discipline, self-control, creativity, desire to learn new things, accepting and appreciating other's views, and intelligence were lacking among the AAO's. About 40 per cent of AO's rated themselves at fair level of leadership quality and Most of the respondents (AOs) rated themselves lower i.e., at excellent level of leadership quality. The verity that respondents (AO's) were paucity in willingness to take responsibility, self-control, desired to learn new things, tidy dressing habits, less studious, inflexible, lack of self-confidence. The following recommendations were proposed; training on competence, capacity building and simulated exercises for leadership development among extension personnel for better extension service.

KEYWORDS: Leadership Qualities, AAO's, AO's, Agriculture Department, Tamil Nadu

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INTRODUCTION

The role of leaders in extension intervention is very significant and it decimates on several extension principles that are familiar. When we remember the principle of teach one teach all? Local leaders command the respect of the rural folks who have so much trust in their leadership. By employing local leaders, the extension worker will be able to accomplish much more in a sustainable manner. However, effective leadership is not a common place thing, though the qualities could be learnt. This course should make you a better leader and make it possible for you to make better leaders out of the rural people with whom you will have contact.

Leader and Leadership

A leader as [a] person initiating interaction with other members of a group, [b] person who initiates interaction more frequently than anyone else in a group and [c] person who moves the group towards the group goal.

Leadership is defined as ability to lead, ability to guide, to direct or influence people. It also refers to the position or authority given to a leader. Leadership can make a difference to the performance of individuals, groups and organisations. A leader with his leadership quality can bring about changes in people's attitudes and

behaviour as a outcome of interaction between leaders and followers.

Some key elements of leadership highlighted as follows:

- Leading takes place in a social setting, among people.
- Quality of leadership is not inherent.
- Leadership is a group attribute.
- Leader's ideas and action influence the thoughts and behaviours of others.
- Success will promote leadership.
- Leadership varies from formal to informal types of influences.
- Leader should possess creativity and innovative brain.
- Leadership will gain decision making power.

This paper deals with the study on the extent of leadership traits possessed by the extension officials of the Department of Agriculture, Tamil Nadu.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted purposively among Assistant Agricultural Officers (AAO) and Agricultural officers (AO) of State Agricultural Department, Tamil Nadu who were the trainees of various training programmes organised by State Agricultural Management Institute, STAMIN, Kudumiyanmalai, Tamil Nadu, during 2015. All the 100 AAOs and 100 AO's who attended the office management trainings organised by STAMIN during 2015 were considered as sample respondents of the study. In order to assess the leadership quality of the respondents (Both AAO's & AO's) a self-assessing tool with five point scale was developed and standardized. A questionnaire including the scale was administered to the respondents. The respondents were asked to rate themselves against the 31 leadership quality parameters on the five point scale bearing scores ranging from 1 to 5. The data was then analysed with simple percentage analysis and tabulated for further interpretation. The scale developed for the study is presented as follows.

Table 1: Assess Your Leadership Qualities

Sl. No.	Leadership Qualities	Five Point Scale				
		5	4	3	2	1
1.	Willingness to take responsibility					
2.	Mental toughness					
3.	Active listening					
4.	Courage to accept mistakes					
5.	Self-discipline					
6.	Self-control					
7.	Hard working					
8.	Creativity					
9.	Good communication					
10.	Emotionally stable					
11.	Good physique					
12.	Helping others to grow					
13.	Desire to learn new things					
14.	Neat dress habits					

Table 1: Contd.,					
15.	Accepting and appreciating other's views				
16.	Intelligence				
17.	Studious				
18.	Boldness to express oneself				
19.	Maintaining good relationship				
20.	Getting along with others easily				
21.	Truthfulness to oneself and to others				
22.	Perfectness				
23.	Tolerance				
24.	Prudence				
25.	Adaptability				
26.	Risk taking				
27.	Integrity				
28.	Reliability				
29.	Practicability				
30.	Self-confidence				
31.	Punctuality and task oriented				
Total					

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on the extent of leadership quality possessed by the respondents they were categorised as given below.

Table 2: Categorisation of Leadership

Sl. No.	Categories	Scores
1.	Excellent	>125
2.	Good	>100
3.	Fair	>75
4.	Bad	<75

Table 3: Leadership qualities of Assistant Agricultural Officers of the Agricultural Department, Tamil Nadu N = 100

Sl. No.	Leadership Quality	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Excellent	09	9.00
2.	Good	28	28.00
3.	Fair	52	52.00
4.	Bad	11	11.00

From Table 3. It is clear that more than half (52%) of the respondents rated their leadership quality at fair level followed by 28 per cent of respondents rated at good level then about 11 percentage of respondents rate at bad level of leadership quality. Finally least per cent of respondents (9%) rated at excellent level of leadership quality. This is due to the fact that the respondents (AAOs) rated themselves low at good and excellent leadership quality because the leadership qualities such as self-discipline, self-control, creativity, desire to learn new things, accepting and appreciating other's views, and intelligence were lacking among the respondents. Hence majority of the AAOs possessed fair level of leadership qualities.

Table 4: Leadership Qualities of Agricultural Officers of the Agricultural Department Tamil Nadu N = 100

Sl. No.	Leadership Quality	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Excellent	16	16.00
2.	Good	39	39.00
3.	Fair	40	40.00
4.	Bad	05	5.00

Table 4. lucidly demarcate that about forty percentage of respondents rated themselves at fair level leadership quality followed by thirty nine per cent of the respondents rated themselves under good level of leadership quality then respondents of about sixteen percentage rated at excellent level of leadership quality and the least percentage (5%) of respondents rated at bad level of leadership quality. Most of the respondents (AOs) rated themselves lower at excellent level of leadership quality. The verity that respondents were paucity in willingness to take responsibility, self-control, desired to learn new things, cumbersome dressing habits, less studious, inflexible, lack of self-confidence. Hence most of the AOs possessed fair level of leadership qualities.

CONCLUSIONS

The present study had assessed the leadership qualities of agricultural extension workers (AAO's & AO's) of Tamil Nadu Agricultural department. In both cases near about half and more than half of the respondents response confirms that they possessed fair level of leadership qualities. In order to progress their level of leadership qualities to excellent level vivid trainings on competence, capacity building and simulated exercises for leadership development to be conducted for better Extension system with potential leaders. Policy makers should involve potential leaders in extension programme planning and confiscate bureaucratic bottlenecks while undertaking extension worker.

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